

Message Text

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TO USMISSION OECD PARIS

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FOR DIETER KIMBEL ALSO INFO CARL WAIT, USOECD

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SUBJ: OECD CONFERENCE ON COMPUTERS AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS POLICY

FOLLOWING IS REPEAT OF TEXT OF OCTOBER 11 COMMERCIAL CABLE,
LOST IN TRANSMISSION. YOU HAVE ASKED MY HELP THAT THE CONTENT OF
THE CONFERENCE BE DISPLAYED FULLY TOGETHER WITH A LETTER OF
INVITATION SO THAT POTENTIAL PARTICIPANTS CAN DECIDE WHETHER
THE CONFERENCE IS OF INTEREST TO THEM.

COPY OF MY FORTHCOMING PRESS COMMENTARY ON THE CONFERENCE
FOLLOWS. SOME OF THAT MATERIAL MAY BE USEFUL TO YOU.

I RECOMMEND THAT YOU PREPARE ATTRACTIVE PRINTED PRELIMINARY
PROGRAMME WITH APPROVAL OF DALE FOR INCLUSION IN LETTER OF
INVITATION. PAGE ONE: TITLE, SPONSOR, TIME, PLACE. PAGE
TWO: PURPOSE AND EXPECTED LEVEL OF ATTENDEES. PAGE THREE:
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OPENING SPEAKERS, TITLES OF THE TALKS. PAGE FOUR THROUGH

SEVEN: PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SESSION, TITLE OF TALKS, ABSTRACTS OF TALKS DRAWN FROM SPEAKERS' BRIEFS, STATEMENTS OF TYPICAL ISSUES.

SECRETARIAT IS IN MORE CENTRAL POSITION TO DO THIS THAN I AM.

FOLLOWING IS A PREVIEW OF A COLUMN WHICH WILL APPEAR IN THE BULLETIN OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR INFORMATION SCIENCES, NOVEMBER 1974:

BULLETIN OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY
FOR INFORMATION SCIENCE
COLUMN ON TELECOMMUNICATIONS
NOVEMBER 1974

JOHN M. RICHARDSON 1/ , CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

1/ OFFICE OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20230.

AN EVENT OF INTERNATIONAL IMPORTANCE IN DATA COMMUNICATIONS WILL TAKE PLACE IN PARIS ON FEBRUARY 4-6, 1975. A CONFERENCE ON COMPUTER-TELECOMMUNICATIONS POLICIES WILL BE HELD BY THE ORGANIZATION FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT (OECD) FOR ABOUT 300 SENIOR OFFICIALS MAINLY FROM MEMBER GOVERNMENTS. THE CONFERENCE IS SIGNIFICANT IN THAT IT IS A TIMELY RATHER THAN BELATED, EFFORT TO DEAL WITH ISSUES AT THE POLICY-MAKING LEVEL PRESSED ON US BY AN EMERGING TECHNOLOGY. INFORMATION AT VARIOUS NODES IN THE NETWORK, TERMINAL HARDWARE THAT GIVES ACCESS TO THE NETWORKS, AND APPLICATIONS THAT SUCH NETWORKS SERVE. THIS FIELD IS SMALL NOW COMPARED, SAY, WITH VOICE TELEPHONE SERVICE; BUT IN MOST INDUSTRIAL NATIONS IT IS THE FASTEST GROWING SEGMENT OF THE INDUSTRY. THE UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY IS STILL OPEN TO FORMULATE CONSIDERED POLICY DECISIONS ABOUT THE FUTURE COURSE OF THIS TECHNOLOGY BEGIN UNDERLINE BEFORE END UNDERLINE IT BECOMES A MATTER OF DOMESTIC URGENCY UNCLASSIFIED

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IN MOST COUNTRIES, AND BEGIN UNDERLINE WELL BEFORE END UNDERLINE IT BECOMES AN INTERNATIONAL PROBLEM.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS CONFERENCE, THEN, IS TO HAVE A LOOK AT THE BENEFITS AND THE RISKS THAT COMPUTER-COMMUNICATIONS MIGHT BRING, TO IDENTIFY THE ISSUES THAT ARE BEING FACED NOW BY VARIOUS COUNTRIES, AND TO HELP THEM TOWARD THEIR ULTIMATE DECISIONS BY DISPLAYING

A WIDE RANGE OF CHOICES FOR RESOLVING THE ISSUES.

THE ISSUES HAVE BEEN GROUPED AROUND FOUR THEMES:

SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS
RESOURCE ALLOCATION
INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS
INTERNATIONAL ASPECTS

AMONG THE OECD COUNTRIES THERE IS A GREAT SPREAD IN THE READINESS TO MAKE COMMITMENTS TO COMPUTER-COMMUNICATIONS FACILITIES. SOME COUNTRIES ARE NOT SURE THAT EDUCATION OR BANKING, OR TAX COLLECTING, OR HEALTH CARE, OR TRANSPORTATION WILL AUTOMATICALLY BE IMPROVED BY SUCH SYSTEMS. DISCUSSION OF THE EXPERIENCE ALREADY GAINED BY A FEW COUNTRIES WILL HELP OTHERS TO SEE HOW AND WHEN THEY THEMSELVES MIGHT GAIN. SHOULD COUNTRIES FAIL SOMEHOW TO ASSURE EQUITY OF ACCESS BETWEEN URBAN AND RURAL AREAS, BETWEEN CITIZEN AND BUREAUCRACY, BETWEEN MANAGEMENT AND LABOR, BETWEEN RICH AND POOR, THERE COULD BE ADVERSE SHIFTS IN POWER GREAT ENOUGH TO NEGATE THE GAINS. SHOULD COUNTRIES FAIL TO PROTECT INTEGRITY OF DATA AND TO REQUIRE VALIDITY OF PRODUCT, THE SYSTEMS WOULD BE QUICKLY REPUDIATED.

A NATIONAL POLICY TO SEIZE THE GAINS AND AVOID THE TRAPS IMPLIES A NATIONAL POLICY FOR THE ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES TO ACHIEVE THESE GOALS. SOME COUNTRIES WILL RELY ON PRIVATE INVESTMENT, OTHERS ON PUBLIC. POLICIES WILL HAVE TO BE MADE TO COVER CONFLICTING GOALS LIKE EQUITY OF ACCESS BY RURAL AND URBAN AREAS ALIKE VS. PRICING BASED ON ACTUAL COST OF SERVICE TO THESE AREAS.

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THE WHOLE, GROWING FIELD MAY BE BITTERLY CONTESTED BETWEEN EXISTING AND NEW SUPPLIERS, RAISING QUESTIONS OF MARKET CONCENTRATION VS. RECEPTIVITY TO USER NEEDS AS SPURRED BY COMPETING SUPPLIERS.

EARLY INTERNATIONAL ATTENTION MAY EASE A HOST OF TROUBLES THREATENED BY TOO SMALL A "GLOBAL VILLAGE." NOBODY WANTS DISPLACEMENT OF NATIVE CULTURES BY AN ALIEN INFORMATION FLOOD. NOBODY WANTS ECONOMIC AND MANAGERIAL CONTROL TO SEEP ACROSS NATIONAL BOUNDARIES THROUGH DATA COMMUNICATIONS CIRCUITS, YET THE FREE FLOW OF DATA ITSELF IS NEEDED. NOBODY WANTS TWO WORLDS -- THE DATA-RICH AND THE DATA-POOR.

THE RESULT OF THE CONFERENCE SHOULD BE A COMPOSITE VIEW

OF ISSUES FACED BY ALL COUNTRIES; AN IDEA OF WHEN SUCH
ISSUES MIGHT KNOCK ON ONE'S DOOR; AND A BROADER RANGE OF
ALTERNATIVE POLICIES, AND THEIR CONSEQUENCES, FOR RESOLV-
ING THE ISSUES. FOR THESE REASONS, IT IS IMPORTANT FOR
SENIOR DECISION-MAKERS IN ALL MEMBER COUNTRIES TO BE THERE,
AND IT IS IMPORTANT FOR THE PROFESSION TO FOLLOW THE CON-
FERENCE PROCEEDINGS AS REPORTED AND LATER PUBLISHED.

PLEASE CONFIRM RECEIPT ASAP. INGERSOLL

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